

BALLARAT FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

EXCURSION - NEWS SHEET - JULY 1974. NO.3.

President: Mr. H. Hooper, Gracefield Road, Brown Hill.

Hon. Secretary: Mr. P. Fry, 19 Stawell Street, Nth., Ballarat.
Phone: 326454.

Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. E. Bedgood, 809 Barkly Street, Mt. Pleasant.

EXCURSION: July 7th, 1974. GEOLOGY. Leader: Mr. P. Day.

Depart from Crockers store in Armstrong Street at 1.30 p.m.

More details available at tonight's meeting.

TONIGHT: Our subject tonight will be "Fungi". It will be an informal discussion and we hope to have several specimens available to inspect, and it is likely that more types will be found on Sunday's excursion.

LAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL: Our Club has sent a submission to the Council, covering all the public land known to us in the Melbourne Study Area.

Areas we were especially concerned with were the Basalt area, Wombat forest and forested areas near Egerton, Bungal and Bamganie. The ICC report on the Mallee is expected later this year and Mr. Coles is preparing a submission on this area. Any person with any knowledge of the Mallee area is asked to contact Mr. Coles. It is possible that a trip to the Mallee will be organized later in the year for this purpose.

TYPING: To reduce costs, our news-sheets are now being typed by members. The June sheet was typed by Mrs. Wright, while this one has been attended to by Miss McNabb. Thanks to both these members for their good work.

EXCURSION TO BASALT - WERONA (Western edge): On June 9th, members braved the rather inclement weather and walked to the lower western ridges of the Basalt - Werona Reserved Forest, via a small gorge cut into the edge of the basalt plain to the west. Beautiful specimens of *Eucalyptus rubida* were seen on the basalt, and *E. viminalis* and *E. melliodora* along Deep Creek. *E. goniocalyx*, *E. dives*, *E. macrorhyncha*, *E. obliqua* and *E. polyanthemos* were found on the Ordovician forested land. This forested area is very interesting, both for birdlife and flora. Members observed the following plants of interest: *Acacia mitchellii*, *A. gunnii*, *A. aculeatissima* both in the usual prostrate form and in the unusual upright shrub form, several presumptive *Acacia* hybrids (*A. armata* x *A. verniciflua*), *Dillwynia retorta* var. *phylicoides* (syn. *D. parvifolia*) and *Oxylobium procumbens*. *Acacia dealbata* is also very plentiful and in many instances remains quite dwarf. There were 22 species of birds seen during the afternoon, the best of which were flame robins in the Deep Creek area and a pair of spotted quail-thrush in the bush above the creek. Also seen were scarlet robin, restless flycatcher and a flock of about 30 red-browed finches.

NEW MEMBERS: At our last meeting Dr. and Mrs. Ron Jelleff were welcomed as members of the Club. We hope they enjoy their association with us.

NEXT MONTH: Our August meeting will be an "Open Forum". It is intended

to discuss various issues affecting the Club, and members are asked to bring any suggestions and ideas to the meeting. Following the recent publicity involving the Club and the Canadian forest, the following question will be discussed: "Does the Club want any public statements made on behalf of the Club? If so, by whom?"

Also possible other topics for discussion will be our attitude towards pine plantations, and our relationship with the relatively new group, Ballarat Environment Action. It is hoped that many members will participate in this meeting.

LAKE WENDOUREE: Following our preparation of a submission to the City Council requesting that speed-boats be banned from Lake Wendouree, Mr. Wheeler has forwarded two letters on this matter he has received from limnologists (limnology is the study of lakes). One from G. Evelyn Hutchinson, of Yale University (U.S.A.) states "Very many thanks for your letter and for letting me see your excellent proposals. I am strongly in favour of the ban that you request. ... At the present time irreversible alteration of so many habitats is proceeding so fast that just as people are learning to appreciate nature, it is slipping away into oblivion". The other is from W. D. Williams, of Monash University, and at present working in the English "Lakes District". He says "... The Council would be well-advised to ban speed boats on this lake if they want to maintain its present ecological status". Both these letters will be available to inspect tonight.

APPEAL: The Bird Observers Club has launched an appeal for a headquarters building in Melbourne. Mr. Gordon Clarke, of Linton, a friend of our own Club, has started the appeal with a donation of \$1000 and has promised to match all other donations subscribed. It is hoped that the appeal is a success, as the BOC are becoming a leading voice in Victorian conservation today, especially in the Melbourne area. Anyone with an interest in nature and conservation will be impressed by Mr. Clarke's generous offer.

YOU YANGS: Over the long weekend last month, it was estimated that 2,000 cars visited the You Yangs Forest Park. The numbers visiting the area are creating a problem for the Committee of Management, and it is hoped that extra land can be added to the Park and that public access be restricted in certain areas. Last weekend the annual tree-planting was carried out in the two usual areas: East Flat, where the Bird Observers Club plant each year, and the Top Saddle, an area planted by the Geelong Field Naturalists Club. On the Saturday a working bee was held and tree-guards collected prior to the Sunday planting. The Geelong F.N.C. also spent the afternoon pulling boneseed and erected a barrier fence to protect the trees and shrubs from trail-bikes - another problem of the area.

BEN MAJOR: Four Club members went spotlighting a fortnight ago in the Ben Major forest, near Beaufort. The result, while not spectacular, was encouraging: 65 grey kangaroos, 3 brush-tailed possums, 3 koalas and two frogmouths. Of course, there were no guns used in this type of spotlighting!